

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, MMOL, MASS, DA

SUBJECT: LEGALITY OF DANISH F-16 PARTICIPATION QUESTIONED

REF: COPENHAGEN 2262, DTG 081655Z JUL 76

SUMMARY: STATEMENTS BY A DANISH PEACE SCHOLAR ASSERTING THAT DANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE F-16 CONSORTIUM WILL LEAD TO VIOLATIONS OF THE DANISH WEAPONS CONTROL LAW TOUCHED OFF A FLURRY OF WEEKEND COMMENTARY ON THE QUESTION. A CONSERVATIVE SUPPORTER OF DANISH F-16 PARTICIPATION CALLED FOR LIBERALIZATION OF THE WEAPONS CONTROL LAW AND A RADICAL PARTY SPOKESMAN (WHO OPPOSES DANISH PARTICIPATION) PICKED UP THE PEACE SCHOLAR'S ASSERTIONS AND PUT THEM IN THE FORM OF A PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION TO DEFENSE MINISTER ORLA MOLLER. MOLLER, ACCORDING TO THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC NEWSPAPER, AKTUELST, REJECTED THEM. IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR SECRETARY RUMSFELD TO BE AWARE OF THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT WHEN HE MEETS WITH DANISH DEFENSE MINISTER MOLLER ON JULY 16.

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END SUMMARY.

1. ON THE EVE OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF CONTRACT AWARDS TO DANISH FIRMS FOR CO-PRODUCTION OF F-16 COMPONENTS, THE ASSERTIONS OF JAN OBERG, A DANISH PEACE AND CONFLICT RESEARCHER AT LUND UNIVERSITY IN SWEDEN, HAVE RAISED THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT DANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE F-16 PROJECT WILL LEAD TO VIOLATIONS OF THE DANISH ARMS CONTROL LAW. THE DANISH LAW FORBIDS THE PRODUCTION OF WEAPONS IN DENMARK BY FIRMS NOT WHOLLY-OWNED BY DANES AND FORBIDS THE SALE OF WEAPONS TO BELLIGERENT NATIONS.

2. CONSERVATIVE MEMBER OF THE FOLKETING AND FORMER DEFENSE MINISTER ERIK NINN-HANSEN RESPONDED TO OBERG'S ASSERTIONS BY SUGGESTING THAT THE WEAPONS CONTROL LAW BE LIBERALIZED. ACCORDING TO POLITIKEN JULY 12, NINN-HANSEN URGED THAT DENMARK OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO REALIZE THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF ARMS EXPORTS TO BELLIGERENTS AND THIRD COUNTRIES. POLITIKEN, WHICH NORMALLY SUPPORTS THE RADICAL PARTY'S LINE, RESPONDED TO THIS SUGGESTION WITH AN EDITORIAL THE SAME DAY STATING THAT SOME OF THE FIRMS RECEIVING CONTRACT AWARDS WOULD APPARENTLY BE IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW SINCE THEY WERE NOT WHOLLY-OWNED BY DANES. MOREOVER, THE EDITORIAL ASSERTED, IT WAS NOT SURPRISING THAT DEMANDS FOR LIBERALIZATION OF THE LAW SHOULD BE ADVANCED SINCE A MAJORITY OF THE FOLKETING HAD SUPPORTED THE PURCHASE OF THE F-16. THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDED WITH A CHALLENGE TO FIRMS PARTICIPATING IN THE PRODUCTION OF F-16 COMPONENTS TO PROVE THEY WERE DANISH AND NOT OWNED BY ITT OR OTHER MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES AND WITH A DECLARATION THAT THE WEAPONS CONTROL LAW SHOULD NOT BE MODIFIED.

3. MEANWHILE, THE RADICAL PARTY'S DEFENSE SPOKESMAN, JENS BILGRAV-NIELSEN, WHOSE PARTY OPPOSES DANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE F-16 PROJECT, ADOPTED OBERG'S ARGUEMENTS AND SUBMITTED A QUESTION TO DEFENSE MINISTER MOLLER ASKING IF THE MINISTER FELT THAT DANISH FIRMS RECEIVING CONTRACTS WOULD VIOLATE THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAW FORBIDDING DELIVERY OF ARMS TO BELLIGERENTS. HE ASKED ALSO IF STEPS HAD BEEN TAKEN TO INSURE THAT PARTICIPATING FIRMS BE WHOLLY-OWNED BY DANES AND WHETHER OR NOT CO-PRODUCTION OF THE F-16 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WOULD GIVE THE ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS WHICH THE FOLKETING HAD BEEN LED TO BELIEVE COULD BE EXPECTED. THE QUESTION REFERRING TO EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS WAS RAISED BY OBERG AND IN THE POLITIKEN EDITORIAL AND STEMS FROM THE FACT THAT THE DANES HAD USED EMPLOYMENT BENEFIT ARGUMENTS TO WIN SUPPORT FOR F-16 PARTICIPATION. (IT NOW APPEARS THAT THE EMPLOYMENT BENEFIT WILL NOT BE AS GREAT AS SOME PEOPLE HAD HOPED.)

4. ACCORDING TO AKTUEL (SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC) JULY 13, ORLA MOLLER WILL RESPOND TO BILGRAV-NIELSEN'S QUERY AS FOLLOWS:

A. THE DANES HAVE BEEN ASSURED THAT THEIR COMPONENTS WILL BE USED ONLY ON AIRPLANES WHICH ARE SOLD IN EUROPE. THE AMERICANS THEMSELVES WILL PRODUCE THE AIRCRAFT WHICH ARE SOLD TO THIRD COUNTRIES;

B. THE DANISH GOVERNMENT UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES WILL BE ASSURED OF CONTROLS WHICH WILL PREVENT THE USE OF DANISH-PRODUCED COMPONENTS IN AIRPLANES WHICH ARE EXPORTED TO COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN CONFLICTS; AND

C. WITH RESPECT TO WEAPONS PRODUCTION BY WHOLLY-OWNED DANISH FIRMS, THIS IS ASSURED BY THE NORMAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES CONDUCTED BY THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE (WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING WHICH COMPONENTS MAY BE CONSIDERED MILITARY ITEMS AND WHICH MAY BE CONSIDERED PEACEFUL PRODUCTION ITEMS).

5. DEFENSE MINISTER MOLLER, IN COMMENTS ON BILGRAV-NIELSEN'S QUESTION, POINTED OUT THAT THESE MATTERS HAD ALREADY BEEN THOROUGHLY DISCUSSED DURING THE FOLKETING'S CONSIDERATION OF DANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE F-16 PROGRAM. FURTHERMORE, HE REJECTED ANY SUGGESTION FOR CHANGES IN THE LAW. LIBERAL PARTY DEFENSE SPOKESMAN ARNE CHRISTIANSEN EXPRESSED HIMSELF ON A SEPARATE OCCASION JULY 12 IN THE SAME WAY, NOTING THAT THE FOLKETING'S DELIBERATIONS ON THESE MATTERS WERE ON PUBLIC RECORD AND AVAILABLE TO ANY CITIZEN WHO DESIRED TO OBTAIN THEM.

6. COMMENT: THE RADICAL PARTY, WHICH SEEMS TO BE BEHIND THIS FLURRY, IS A SMALL PARTY WITH ONLY 13 SEATS IN THE 179-SEAT FOLKETING, BUT HAS MUCH MORE INFLUENCE THAN ITS SIZE WOULD INDICATE. IT HAS A HISTORY OF PACIFISM AND, TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A LARGE EXTENT, IS CONSIDERED THE INTELLECTUAL CONSCIENCE OF DANISH POLITICS. THE PARTY'S CONCURRENCE IS ALWAYS SOUGHT ON DEFENSE MATTERS AND THE PARTY IS ONE OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THE FOUR-PARTY "DEFENSE AGREEMENT" WHICH HAS BROUGHT SO MUCH STABILITY TO DANISH DEFENSE MATTERS. ITS INVOLVEMENT, HOWEVER, WAS BOUGHT THROUGH THE LOWERING OF DANISH DEFENSE EXPENDITURES, A REDUCTION IN THE LENGTH OF OBLIGATORY SERVICE AND OTHER SUCH "PACIFIST" CONCESSIONS. IT IS THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS' DESIRE TO HAVE RADICAL INVOLVEMENT IN ANY NEW "DEFENSE AGREEMENT" THAT HAS DELAYED ITS APPROVAL THIS YEAR AND, IN THE CONTEXT OF THE GENERAL ECONOMIC SITUATION, MAKES IT PROBABLE THAT DEFENSE EXPENDITURES WILL BE REDUCED FROM EARLIER FORECASTS.

7. THE LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE PARTY SPOKESMEN'S REACTION

TO OBERG AND DEFENSE MINISTER MOLLER'S RESPONSE TO BILGRAV-
NIELSEN'S PARLIAMENTARY QUERY INDICATE THAT THE FOLKETING
DECISION ON THE F-16 WILL NOT BE CHANGED BY THIS KIND OF
PROTEST AND THAT ORLA MOLLER HIMSELF WILL LEAD THE DEFENSE
OF DANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE PROJECT.
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